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ABSTRACT

This technical assistance guide contains information on sources to fund a comprehensive literacy component in an employment and training program. The section on public funding addresses federal and state funding, funding processes, and strictures on public funding. A section on private funding focuses on the two largest sources -- foundations and corporations. Other funding sources in a program's community are then considered, including United Way campaign, churches, associations, and clubs. A chart provided in each of the first three sections indicates sources available and some limitations associated with them. The next section addresses educating the funding community and discussing with funders such topics as a definition of literacy, outcome goals, the teaching of literacy, cost per participant; and serving the needs of low-income single parents. Strategies are suggested to increase the chances of gaining funding through knowing the sources and knowing the players. A section on organizing to raise funds andresses accountability Within the organization and coordination and collaboration with other programs. Other sections focus on the interaction of women's employment and training programs serving low-income women with public systems that administer welfare, education, and job training funds and list strategies for dealing with funding uncertainties. Twenty resources are listed. (YLB)



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WIDER OPPORTUNITIES:

COMBINING LITERACY AND

EMPLOYMENT TRAINING

FOR WOMEN

Program Funding

A Technical Assistance Guide

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Funding for Literacy and Employment Training Programs A Technical Assistance Guide

A Supplement to:

Combining Literacy and Employment Training

A Program Model

Published by:

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About Wider Opportunities for Women, Inc.

Wider Opportunities for Women works nationally and in its home community of Washington, D.C., to achieve economic independence and equality of opportunity for women and girls. For over 25 years, WOW has been at the forefront of women's employment issues.

What began as a local Washington effort to help women help themselves has become a multi-faceted women's employment organization, recognized nationally for its model training and job placement programs for women. WOW also leads a national network of 450 independent women's employment programs and advocates in 48 states. Each year, WOW's network serves more than a quarter of a million women seeking employment information, counseling, training and jobs. With its unique perspective as a job trainer and policy monitor, WOW is a respected advocate for the needs and rights of women workers.

This technical assistance guide was written by Judy A. Beck. The editors were Phyllis Furdell and Sandra Van Fossen. Carrie Roy was the administrative assistant.

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Preface

Single Female Parent Literacy Project

In 1987-88, with support from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Wider Opportunities for Women (WOW) implemented an 18-month, four-city action research effort which focused on the employment training and literacy needs of low-income single mothers. Activities of the Single Female Parent Literacy Project included conducting studies of women's employment and training programs serving low-income women in order to identify successful literacy strategies and the subsequent development and dissemination of a literacy skills program model located within an employment and training setting.

A comprehensive definition of literacy was used throughout the project in recognition of the changes in the nature of jobs predicted for the workforce by the year 2000. Not only are good basic skills--reading, writing, mathematics--needed for the workplace, but also higher order critical thinking skills and familiarity with computer technology.

The findings of the WOW research project suggested that onsite linkage of literacy classes to an employment and training program can be a significant factor in inspiring a woman to view improving her basic education skills as the foundation for improving her economic future. Developed with input from the original case study sites, the resultant program model combines the following key elements:

- o integration of literacy skills into employment training;
- o aggressive, sensitive outreach and recruitment;



- o provision for comprehensive support services;
- o small group training experiences in combination with individualized remediation;
- o inclusion of computer literacy and critical thinking skills;
- o career and other counseling;
- o work experience internships in employer settings; and
- o job search and follow-up.

The full program model is detailed in the manual <u>Wider</u>

<u>Opportunities: Combining Literacy and Employment Training for</u>

<u>Women.</u> (See publications list at the back of this guide).

Women's Workplace Literacy Initiative

From 1988-90, the U.S. Department of Labor funded a demonstration of the literacy and employment training program model. Targeted within four of the original case study sites, the Women's Workplace Literacy Initiative has provided supplemental funding for implementation of the model's key components. The results have been a strengthening of both the literacy and the employment training offerings in each of the four participating agencies:

Nontraditional Employment for Women (NEW), New York, NY
The Midwest Women's Center (MWC), Chicago, IL
The STEP Foundation: Mary Crowley Academy (MCA), Dallas, TX
Wider Opportunities for Women (WOW), Washington, DC



Technical Assistance Guides

The information contained in this technical assistance guide comes out of the demonstration experiences of the four program sites. While this guide can be used as an independent resource, it is designed to be a supplement to the program manual <u>Wider Opportunities: Combining Literacy and Employment Training for Women.</u>



Funding for Literacy and Employment Training Programs A Technical Assistance Guide

Sparked by the national debate about jobs of the future and the skills that will be needed for those jobs, the literacy requirements of the workforce have attracted increasing attention. A variety of funding sources, public and private, have added literacy to their list of interests so that the issue has a higher profile than ever before.

even so, it is a challenge for many employment and training programs to secure the funding necessary to implement a comprehensive literacy component. Most low-income, single mothers who enter programs bring many life problems with them. In order to assist women to reach their goals of either more education or good or better jobs, programs must provide a full array of services.

Experience has demonstrated that most women need more than job training in order to become economically self-sufficient.

Because their time in the labor force or exposure to education and job skills has often been minimal, many program participants need a combination of skill training, remediation or basic literacy skills, life skills, career exploration, job search and follow up. Consequently, the length of time a woman needs to spend in a program may be longer, and therefore, more costly. The cost of child care and other support services is also high.



Being able to assist a woman with these services can have a positive impact on her success in a program.

There are, however, many potential funding sources for employment and training programs that incorporate literacy components. Unfortunately, one source alone generally will not cover all operational expenses. Some funders have a narrowly defined focus and will not extend funding for program components considered to be outside of their interest. Other funding sources have specific end goals, such as job placement for participants, and on fund those services directly related to placement goals.

Most programs have to put together a package of funding from different sources, all of which may have different deadlines, target populations, service provision guidelines, reporting requirements, outcome expectations and fiscal years.

Finding a balance between having too many funding sources — a nightmare for financial managers and accountants — and over— reliance on one major source (if it's not renewed the program collapses) is difficult. Each demonstration site has put together a combination of funds to cover program components. The variety of their funding sources suggests that there is no one way to structure a program's funding picture.

For example, the Midwest Women's Center gets 66 percent of its budget from public funds through the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) and the remainder from fund raising events, corporate support, foundations and individual contributions. The Mary



Crowley Academy, on the other hand, gets no JTPA money and is funded exclusively by the private sector. Nontraditional Employment for Women receives public funds from many sources — Titles II and III of JTPA, and the Carl Perkins Vocational Education Act, as well as small amounts from private companies and foundations. Finally, over 60% of WOW's funding for its training program comes from public dollars, with the remainder divided among foundation grants, gifts and service fees.

Each of the programs has attempted to diversify its funding base to include public, foundation, corporation, individual, in-kind and special event monies.

Funding Sources: Public

Federal policy makers have proposed provisions to strengthen basic skills instruction within both the Job Training Partnership Act and the Vocational Education Act—and remediation was included as a program component of the Family Support Act passed in 1988. With the goal of "eliminating illiteracy by the year 2000," the 101st Congress added literacy to its agenda by considering legislation establishing support for national literacy coordination efforts for workplace, intergenerational and library literacy programs and for literacy volunteers.

Public funding is the largest stream of funding available to programs. Federal funding, such as JTFA, Vocational Education, Adult Education and the Family Support Act, is passed to the state for allocation to service providers. Accessing those

dollars can be difficult. It is necessary for a program to understand each separate system and to respond appropriately.

A program may need to request that it be placed on the mailing list of potential vendors of the JTPA Private Industry Council for their Service Delivery Area (SDA) and then submit a detailed response to a proposal in competition with other programs. Some funding sources will not give money directly to a community-based organization, and, therefore, a program may need to form a partnership with a local education agency. State public funding is also a possible source. Again, the program must understand how the state processes work.

Public funding tends to carry strictures that can inhibit a program from adding services it feels are necessary.

Performance-based contracts are not uncommon, and a program may find itself in the position of fronting the cost of services and then applying for reimbursement monies after specific benchmarks or targets are achieved (i.e., number of participants enrolled, number served, number placed and retained in jobs, etc.). While retention of clients is a high priority with all programs, most programs serving poor women and children are penalized when their retention rates go down. The loss of clients often correspond to housing, health, and relationship crises that are not connected to the value of the training or the competency of the staff.

The following chart outlines some of the public sources available and the limitations associated with them.



Public Funding Sources

SOURCE	TARGET POPULATION	ACCESS	RESTRICTIONS
Federal JTPA-Title IIA	Low-income Economically disadvantaged	PIC State	o Participants must meet income guidelines o Contracts are often performance- based o Admin costs are capped o Emphasis on job placement
JTPA-Title III	Dislocated workers; displaced homemakers	PIC State	o As above
Voc Ed	Single parents; displaced homemakers teen mothers	State Dept. of Educ.	o May not be available to CBOs
Adult Ed Act	Educationally disadvantaged;	State Dept. of Educ.	o Funds go to local educ. agencies only
Even Start	Families	State Dept. of Educ.	o Small program
Family Support Act (JOBS Program)	AFDC & AFDC-UP recipient	State Dept. of Human Services	o Participants must meet income guidelines o States vary in what is funded
Local State, county or municipal	Defined in state and local legislation	State or local agencies	o May not be available on a annual basis o May be political



Funding Sources: Private

A major alternative or supplement to public funding is private funding. The two largest sources are foundations and corporations. Most programs are able to solicit seed monies or one to two year grant funds from foundations. Some foundations restrict start-up or seed money to a one-time grant.

Corporations usually make smaller donations and may be a good source for in-kind contributions of equipment, staff expertise or printing of publications.

Grants from private funding sources tend to be more flexibile than contracts from public funding sources. For example, they usually require less paperwork and are less technical. However, private funders still require reports on measurable objectives and a narrative describing the work accomplished with the dollars contributed. There has been a drastic reduction in the availability of general grants for operational use by programs. These grants, while probably most useful to the community-based organizations, have declined as corporations and foundations have sought to establish visibility in specific issues rather than for support of women in general.

while public funders will issue requests for proposa 5, most foundations and corporations will accept pre-proposals that fit in with their interests at anytime. Usually a proposal or a letter of solicitation is sent to the foundation or corporation, and the funder, if interested, will request a more detailed proposal. Funding decisions tend to be made on a regular

schedule, and the funding cycle may be such that a program's request can take as long as a year to process through channels. Researching potential foundation or corporate funders is necessary so that a program can tailor its requests to the particular interests of the source.

The following chart indicates the funding sources available and some of the limitations associated with them.

Private Funding Sources

SOURCE	TARGET POPULATION	ACCESS	RESTRICTIONS
<u>Private</u> Foundations	Defined by funder or grantee	Proposal or pre- proposal	o May be long application process o Usually only fund what are interested in o Usually short-term or "seed"
Corporations	Defined by corporation or grantee	Letter of Solicita- tion	o Usually hard to obtain o Need to show direct benefit to the corp. o Usually under \$10,000 grants

Funding Sources: Other

There may be money available in a program's community through the United Way Campaign, churches, associations or clubs. Because they are local, these groups will look to a program's status in the community and assess its service reputation.

Joining a United Way Campaign may be difficult in many communities. Competition is strong for inclusion in the campaign, and programs must undergo a rigorous process before being accept d. While becoming part of the United Way Campaign takes the direct fundraising pressure off a program, the amount of funding allocated is usually not sufficient to cover an entire program budget. There are also stringent restrictions on the amount of funding solicitation a program can carry on outside of the United Way effort. Also many private funders give generously to the United Way and do not fund programs already supported by United Way dollars.

Women's Clubs and social clubs like Rotary, Kiwanis and Lions are a potential source of income. A contribution may be small, under \$500, but getting a club interested in your objectives helps to build your reputation. It also helps you to meet and lobby important members of your community who could become board members. Often programs solicit and receive one or two \$50-\$100 awards to give to program graduates who have achieved at a high level. A club might also invite a program leader to speak at a monthly meeting and make a pitch for volunteers or monetary help. Associations usually represent special interest groups: examples include the National Bar Association, the Association for Life Insurance, or the American Bankers Association. Asking for contributions from associations should always be linked to their self-interest. Besides money,



associations often can contribute space for events or meetings, meals for events, printing or other in-kind services.

A program can also look for ways to generate funds through special events. In Chicago, The Midwest Women's Center has a special events coordinator who monitors theater and film openings and art shows that could be the back drop for fund raising. MCW also hosts a yearly honors dinner for Chicago employers. At WOW in Washington, DC, a support services fund is collected through direct mail solicitation of WOW's local constituency. The fund is used to help program trainees with housing, child care and personal emergencies. Community-based organizations are beginning to look at their areas of expertise with an eye to charging a fee for services and publications. Often programs continue to give away materials and skills for which others in the community are paid.

The following chart indicates the variety of other funding sources and some of the limitations associated with them.



SOURCE	TARGET POPULATION	ACCESS	RESTRICTIONS
<u>Community</u> United Way	Clients with UW member agencies	Must be member of campaign	o Can not solicit other funds from community or corporations
Churches, associations or clubs	Multiple populations	Direct	o Grants are usually small
Program Special events, fees from other program services, individual donation memberships, direct mail solicitation	•	Budget	o May be labor intensive

The Politics of Funding

No matter which combination of funding sources is considered, program operators should plan on spending energy educating the funding community. Few initiatives really target comprehensive literacy services directly or provide substantive new resources to increase the literacy of low-income, single parents.

There is still a need for the continuing education of funders to make them aware of the unique life experiences and needs that low-income, single parent women bring to education and training programs.

The definition of "literacy" itself may need interpretation with potential funders. Comprehensive literacy services should not only include the basic education skills of reading, writing



and mathematics, but also experience with computers and the development of critical thinking skills (problem solving, analysis, decision making). Funders need to learn that they can support a program's life skills or parenting components and still be funding literacy.

There are many other possible areas which have important program implications and which need to be discussed and worked out with funders. These areas may involve any of the following:

- o <u>Outcome goals</u>: If the funding source mandates job placement at the end of a program, funders may need to be educated regarding the desirability of further education for some participants. Documented skill improvement may also need to be recognized as an important outcome.
- o <u>The teaching of literacy</u>: Some funding sources may have a favorite method of teaching literacy skills, such as computer-based skills development, and may not appreciate the value of a program which incorporates a variety of methods.
- o <u>Cost per participant</u>: Because low-income women have a greater need for support services in order to complete training successfully and enter the work place, training costs will be higher. Funders need to understand the rationale for these costs.
- o <u>Serving the needs of low-income</u>, <u>single parents</u>: Some funding sources want to mainstream women into training programs with men or believe that only programs directly



connected with educational institutions can provide
literacy services. Funders need to understand the
multiple barriers suffered by women who need our services
-- low self esteem, lack of child care, health and housing
problems. Only comprehensive programs will succeed in
lowering those barriers.

Upping the Ante

Programs can employ a variety of strategies to increase their chances of gaining funding. These strategies include involvement of both staff and board members.

Know the Sources: The first step is to identify all possible sources of potential funding, public and private--even if the program decides it does not want to access those funds now. Because of the increased attention literacy is receiving, there may be new initiatives at the federal, state and local levels which could benefit programs ready to tap them.

It is important not to reject any one source of funding until it has been thoroughly investigated. For example, a program may have not applied for public funds because of the perceived restrictions, yet the benefits of having access to a larger grant may outweigh the increased requirements. A program should always reserve the right not to pursue or accept funding from a source that will compromise the program's own principles of service to its defined population.



Know the Players. Once funding sources have been identified, the program needs to identify the key players and decision makers administering these funds and to establish relationships with those persons. It is critical that programs not treat all funding sources alike. Each will have its own process for allocating funds and knowing how to approach each one is important. No matter what the source, it is always helpful to have some personal contact with key players. Funders tend to pay more attention to programs they know something about.

The following are some ways for programs to develop and maintain contacts with funding sources:

- o Use the connections that staff and board members have to initiate an introduction of your program to the appropriate people.
- o Routinely send program materials to agencies, legislators, foundations, businesses and community groups to keep them informed.
- o Invite representatives of potential funding sources to visit your program and to attend program events.
- o When a legislative body (federal, state or local) is holding hearings on literacy-related provisions that will define program guidelines and funding levels, provide testimony based on the program's experience. It is important to present the realities of program operation before funding guidelines and restrictions are enacted.



o Attend public meetings or events held by potential funders.

By establishing the program's identity as much as possible in funders' minds before actually applying for funding, the program can enhance its credibility. This kind of contact does not take the place of demonstrated program performance, nor is it an attempt to curry favor. It is no guarantee of funding, but if a funder is familiar with your program, the funder is more likely to pay attention to your proposal. It is possible also, that if the program is awarded a contract or grant, it will be helpful to know the players who may be involved in negotiating the terms.

Organizing to Raise Funds

The primary responsibility for building the kinds of linkages described above most often will fall to the executive director or the director of the literacy and employment/training component. In hiring for these positions, it is important to look for people who have strong contacts in the funding arena as well as good conceptual communications skills. A certain amount of time on the job needs to be allocated to being in the community and building the kind of ties that will pay off in funding.

Some organizations hire a development director who carries primary responsibility for researching potential funding sources and developing proposals. Sometimes this function is performed by several people within the organization. Technical support

such as this is important and needs to be accounted for through assignation of specific duties to staff and in budgeting for the organization.

Even though the board of directors delegates much fund raising accountability to the executive director, the board should consider its own responsibilities in this area. Boards of directors are held legally liable for the fiscal well being of nonprofit organizations. Board members can be asked to participate in fund raising by using their connections on behalf of the organization, contributing meney as well as time to the organization, planning for financial solvency and lending support to the executive director as needed. The program needs to solicit board members who have access to financial resources as well as those who have legal expertise or program development experience, represent the constituency or have other related skills and talents.

Programs participants can be involved in fundraising activities. These volunteers can be of assistance when it comes to putting on special events or conducting an annual membership drive. Funders are very interested to hear what a program is doing for itself to raise monies.

Programs need to talk to each other and share information about funding opportunities and pitfalls. Forming or joining coalitions and networks with other literacy and employment and training providers is a useful strategy. Such groups can leverage their collective strength and work to change funding



guidelines for the good of all programs involved. Rather than seeing this as a competitive situation, programs can look for ways to help each other. There are usually more than enough people who need services.

Many funding sources are stressing coordination and collaboration. By being active in a coalition or network, a program can build relationships with others and put together a cooperative proposal that will win funding for all of the programs. Wider Opportunities for Women successfully proposed to a corporate funder that equal grants be given to four employment and training sites across the country, thus giving a national focus to the contribution.

Programs should also look for opportunities to cooperate on conferences and events so that local financial resources are not spread too thin. Sharing space, materials, lists and information can only strengthen the fundraising process.

Funding and Program Implications

Most women's employment and training programs serving lowincome women cannot operate without interacting with the public systems that administer welfare, education and job training funds. These public systems can have a significant effect on individual program operation in the situations that follow:

Program conflict with a public system--In one city, the state welfare system exerts pressure on clients to enter one of its own training programs instead of a local community-based



women's employment and training program. The welfare system has rapid job placement as the preferred goal. Because an acceptable placement for the community-based program is further educational training, the system discourages enrollment in that program. As a result of this conflict, the independent program loses clients between recruitment and enrollment, and this can affect future funding.

Similarly, some programs would like to structure their offerings in a secuence so that women can progress through different levels. However, some public funding systems will not allow a program to count the same woman twice as she moves from one level or program offering to another, even if that is what makes the most sense for the woman's educational and skill goals. Consequently, programs must move women out or lose funding, even if that is not in the client's best interest.

Program dependence upon a public system—The program offered by one women's employment and training agency included literacy instruction and introductory workshops on nontraditional job skills. This was not deemed by the city to be a full occupational skills training program, thus rendering the program ineligible for subsidized child care services for its participants. Without this access to publicly funded child care, the program had to either assume the cost of assisting the women or risk losing participants. In order to keep women in the program, they had to assume an additional and substantial funding burden.



Program vulnerability to a public system—Dependence on one major source of funding can render programs vulnerable to unexpected reductions and expansions with little time to deal with the resultant changes to staff and structure. One program had received CETA and JTPA funding for many years but suddenly learned the contract would not be renewed. As a result, three of its occupational skills offerings had to be discontinued and five staff laid—off in a very brief time frame. On the other hand, another program finally received a JTPA contract that would allow it to expand both its offerings and add staff.

Dependence on private sources—Some programs may find themselves heavily dependent on private sources of funding. This may take the form of large, multi-year grants from one foundation or a high percentage of the budget coming from a combination of smaller grants from many sources. Either situation can result in the same impact on programs as the problems associated with public sources outlined above. The large grant can be discontinued and major revisions in program services will result. In the case of many small grants, the high energy needed to seek annual renewal or replacement can drain a program's personnel.

Strategies for Dealing with Funding Uncertainties

Given the highly volatile nature of funding, programs are wise to plan ahead to avoid or at least soften the drastic cut-backs in staff and services that usually accompany a major funding loss. By employing a variety of strategies, a program



may be able to manage swings in funding in order to mitigate the effects.

Following are some strategies for managing in the face of funding uncertainties:

- o Diversify funding sources as much as reasonably possible.
- o Include full administrative costs in grant proposals and requests for specific projects.
- o Avoid budgeting all the funds in case of performance problems with JTPA and other performance-based projects.
- o Be careful about accepting "pilot" or "demonstration" funding unless there is an identified source of funds to follow-up; use the demonstration project to be an adjunct or enhancement to existing projects.
- o Spend conservatively; project revenue sources from the "most sure" to the "least sure" and monitor the gap.
- o Stay on top of the cash flow situation for the entire year and monitor it; have a contingency line of credit available at the bank for hard times.
- o Inform staff of the organization's full funding picture and keep them informed of ups and downs; when hiring, let new staff know that while there are no guarantees, the program employs sound financial management strategies.
- o Adopt a conservative staff growth plan, especially for short-term grants and contracts.
- o Keep job descriptions flexible so staff can cover lost positions; invest in some staff cross-training.



Conclusion

Overall, programs can keep in mind three principles regarding funding:

- 1. A well-known and respected program is more likely to be funded.
- 2. A funder who is well-informed about your program is more likely to listen and respond to funding requests.
- 3. A diversified funding base is more likely to support a program over the long term.

Funding is available for literacy components of employment and training programs. The effort in fundraising can be incredibly time-consuming, primarily for executive directors. Building support within the program and the board for the fundraising effort is vital. Each person involved with the program can play some part in securing the programs fiscal soundness, even if it is simply being successful in the classroom, being a good representative of the program in the community, or conserving program costs.



Resources

FUND RAISING

Te Chronicle of Philanthropy. 1255 Twenty-third Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20037. (\$57.50/year)

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Technical Assistance Guide Evaluation Form Name, Program and Address:_____ How did you first learn about the WOW Combining Literacy and Employment Training Program Model: Ordered manual from publications list Attended training on the program model Learned of it through this guide Referred to the manual/model by another program Other Are you currently operating an employment and training program for low-income women that: incorporates literacy classes would like to begin literacy classes is not interested in beginning literacy classes How has this guide been useful to you? 3.

- 4. Would was the most helpful aspect of this guide?
- 5. How could this guide be improved?
- 6. Please share any successful strategies that you are familiar with related to this guide's subject matter.

